

# PM press conference statement at the G20: 31 October 2021

Six years ago the Paris Agreement made an historic commitment to end the destruction and devastation caused by climate change.

Together they agreed to limit global temperature increases to well below 2 degrees with a view to keeping that increase at 1.5 degrees.

But hundreds of summits, speeches, press conferences like this later, those words and promises are starting to sound, frankly, hollow.

The science is clear that we need to act now to halve emissions by 2030 and keep 1.5 degrees within reach.

There are no compelling excuses for our procrastination.

Not only have we acknowledged the problem, we are already seeing first-hand the devastation climate change causes: from heat waves and droughts to wildfires and hurricanes.

And unlike many other global challenges, the solution to climate change is clear.

It lies in consigning dirty fossil fuels like coal to history, in ditching gas guzzling modes of transport and recognising the role that nature plays in preserving life on this planet, and harnessing the power of nature through renewable energy rather than orchestrating its destruction.

If we don't act right now the Paris agreement will be looked at in the future not as the moment humanity opened its eyes to the problem, but the moment we flinched and turned away.

We've seen some progress in the last few days and weeks.

Saudi Arabia, Australia and Russia have all made net zero commitments – meaning 80% of the global economy will wipe out its contribution to climate change by the middle of the century, up from 30% thanks to the UK's COP26 leadership.

Countries such as the United States have doubled their spending on climate aid. Every nation at this weekend's summit will end the financial support for international unabated coal projects by the end of this year.

But these commitments, welcome as they are, are drops in a rapidly warming ocean when we consider the challenge we have all admitted is ahead of us.

Just 12 G20 members have committed to reach net zero by 2050 or earlier. Barely half of us have submitted improved plans for how we will cut carbon

emissions since the Paris Summit in 2015.

And we have also failed to meet our commitment to provide \$100bn a year to support developing countries to grow in a clean and sustainable way.

The UN says emissions will rise by 15% by 2030, and they need to halve by then.

The countries most responsible for historic and present-day emissions are not yet doing their fair share of the work.

If we are going to Prevent COP26 from being a failure then that must change.

And I must be clear, that if Glasgow fails, then the whole thing fails.

The Paris Agreement will have crumpled at the first reckoning. The world's only mechanism, viable mechanism, for dealing with climate change will be holed beneath the water line.

Right now the Paris Agreement, and the hope that came with it, is just a piece of paper. We need to fill that piece of paper to populate it with real progress.

And I know that humanity has in it the power to rise to the challenge.

The UK has proved it can be done – we have lowered our greenhouse gas emissions by 44% in the last 30 years whilst increasing our GDP by 78%.

And we're cutting our contribution to climate change more and more every day.

We have made some progress at this G20. We have had a reasonable G20, but there is a huge way still to go.

We all know that we have the technology. What we need to do now is to raise the finance, but above all we need the political will, in Glasgow, to make those commitments.

And to keep alive the hope of restraining the growth of our temperatures to 1.5 degrees.

Thank you very much and see you in Glasgow.

---

## [UK response to US statement on steel and aluminium](#)

News story

The Department for International Trade welcomes the US Administration's commitment to consult closely on bilateral and multilateral trade issues.



Following a [statement issued today by the US Department of Commerce](#), a Department for International Trade spokesperson said:

We welcome the Biden Administration's willingness to work with us to address trade issues relating to steel and aluminium, and it is encouraging that the US is taking steps to de-escalate this issue.

The International Trade Secretary recently held positive discussions with US Trade Representative Katherine Tai in London. The UK is committed to addressing both global steel overcapacity and decarbonisation, and we remain focused on agreeing a resolution that sees damaging tariffs removed to the benefit of businesses on both sides of the Atlantic.

Published 31 October 2021

---

## [UK response to US statement on steel and aluminium](#)

News story

The Department for International Trade welcomes the US Administration's commitment to consult closely on bilateral and multilateral trade issues.



Following a [statement issued today by the US Department of Commerce](#), a Department for International Trade spokesperson said:

We welcome the Biden Administration's willingness to work with us to address trade issues relating to steel and aluminium, and it is encouraging that the US is taking steps to de-escalate this issue.

The International Trade Secretary recently held positive discussions with US Trade Representative Katherine Tai in London. The UK is committed to addressing both global steel overcapacity and decarbonisation, and we remain focused on agreeing a resolution that sees damaging tariffs removed to the benefit of businesses on both sides of the Atlantic.

Published 31 October 2021

---

## [COP26 President Alok Sharma's opening speech at COP26](#)

Friends, it is an honour to speak to you today for the first time as COP President.

And I want to thank my dear friend Carolina for her really strong leadership over the past two years.

Friends, I am very aware of the responsibility placed upon me in this role.

And I do not underestimate the challenge.

Let me start first by formally welcoming you to Glasgow.

And I want to thank you for all your efforts in getting to the United Kingdom, which I know for some has been arduous due to the impacts of the

pandemic.

Indeed for almost two years now the pandemic has caused devastation and disruption, to lives and livelihoods across the world.

And I know this has particularly affected the least developed countries and the small island developing states.

And because of the pandemic, as you know, we postponed COP26 by a year. But during that year, climate change did not take time off.

And the IPCC report in August was a wake-up call for all of us.

It made clear that the lights are flashing red on the climate dashboard.

That report, agreed by 195 Governments, makes clear that human activity is unequivocally the cause of global warming.

And we know that the window to keep 1.5 degrees within reach is closing.

I have been humbled to speak over this year with communities devastated by climate change.

On a visit to Jomsom in Nepal, in the Hindu-Kush region I spoke to communities literally displaced from their homes from a combination of droughts and floods.

In Barbuda I met communities still suffering from the ravages of Hurricane Irma four years ago.

I have spoken with communities in East Africa fighting plagues of locusts spawned by climate change.

And earlier this month I spoke to a group of women in Madagascar,

Determinedly coping with what some describe, as the first climate induced famine in the world.

Friends, in each of our countries we are seeing the devastating impact of a changing climate.

Floods, cyclones, wildfires, record temperatures.

We know that our shared planet is changing for the worse.

And we can only address that together, through this international system.

And we know what we need to do.

Because six years ago, in Paris we agreed our shared goals.

We said we would protect people and nature from the effects of climate change.

We said we would get finance flowing to climate action.

And we said we would limit the rise in global temperature to well below two degrees pursuing efforts towards 1.5.

The rapidly changing climate is sounding an alarm to the world, to step up on adaptation, to address loss and damage, and to act now to keep 1.5 alive.

We know that this COP, COP26, is our last best hope to keep 1.5 in reach.

And I know that we have an unprecedented negotiations agenda ahead of us.

But I believe this international system can deliver.

It must deliver.

And as COP President I am committed to promoting transparency and inclusivity.

And I will lead this conference in accordance with the draft rules of procedure, and with the utmost respect for the party-driven nature of our process.

In that spirit I believe that we can resolve the outstanding issues. We can move the negotiations forward. And we can launch a decade of every increasing ambition and action.

And, together, we can seize the enormous opportunities for green growth, for good green jobs, for cheaper, cleaner power.

But we need to hit the ground running to develop the solutions that we need.

And that work, my friends, starts today.

And we will succeed.

Or fail.

As one.

Astronauts speak of the intense emotion they feel when looking back at Earth from space. Seeing it gleaming through the darkness of the cosmos.

Incredible, improbable and infinitely precious.

And if we act now, and we act together, we can protect our precious planet.

So let's come together over these two weeks.

And ensure that where Paris promised, Glasgow delivers.

Thank you.

---

# PM meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron: 31 October 2021

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met French President Macron today at the G20 Summit in Rome.



The Prime Minister met French President Macron today at the G20 Summit in Rome.

The Prime Minister and President Macron looked forward to next week's COP26 Summit, which they agreed must be a decisive moment in the fight against climate change. The Prime Minister thanked President Macron for France's leadership and ongoing support to climate vulnerable countries.

The Prime Minister raised the Northern Ireland protocol, which he said was the most important issue currently affecting UK-EU relations. The Prime Minister stressed the need to urgently agree a solution in order to protect the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, including on governance.

The leaders discussed fishing licences. The Prime Minister reiterated his deep concern over the rhetoric emanating from the French Government in recent days, including the suggestion by the French Prime Minister that the UK should be punished for leaving the EU. He expressed his hope that the French Government would de-escalate this rhetoric and withdraw their threats.

Published 31 October 2021